

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PARTNERSHIP
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
May 20, 2009

Board Members Present: Secretary Gayle Harris, Public Health; Ellen Reckhow, Durham County Commissioner; John Lee, Community Corrections; Marcia Owen, Victim Services; Carolyn Titus, Deputy County Manager; Antoinette Hilliard, Public Defender's Office; Deborah Schwartz, Member At Large; Lao Rubert, Member At Large; DeWarren Langley, Member At Large

Board Members Absent: Chairperson Ann McKown, Ellen Holliman, Mental Health; Fredericka Carver, Member At Large; Lafonda General, Member At Large; Gary Thompson, Community Based Corrections Program; David Saacks, District Attorney; Mike Andrews, Office of the Sheriff

Staff: Gudrun Parmer, Jo Iverson, Robin Heath, and Jonie Coss

Guests: Conrad Strader, Community Corrections Division II; Rob Robinson, Durham Center; Ralph Love, Sheriff Dept; Alison Dawes, Duke Student Consulting Group

Introductions: Secretary Gayle Harris welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Members and guests introduced themselves.

Minutes: February 18, 2009 minutes were presented for approval. Minutes approved without corrections.

Budget / Funding Updates for FY 2010:

Gudrun referred everyone to the enclosed CJRC Community-Based Corrections Performance Measures for FY09. She explained the developed measurements were part of CJRC's budget proposal submission to the County each year. She briefly explained each measurement on substance abuse treatment, employment, and recidivism and stated if there were any questions, to feel free to contact her.

Gudrun stated that she had been prepared to give a positive update on the status of the CJPP budget; however, she received the news recently from Lao that CJPP may not be in the State's budget this year, so she was unsure what to report to the board today. She stated if CJPP funding was cut, CJRC would have to slash an additional \$182,188 from its already reduced budget. Gudrun identified the area's most likely affected if CJPP was cut: the Transitional House and two positions, if not more. She added, CJRC had submitted a budget request to the County Manager's Office, which reflected a 10% reduction in net County dollars; so any loss in grant funding would be in addition to the County cut. At this point, the County reduction is about 6.5% across departments. Lao stated she thought CJPP was in good shape, until yesterday. She provided a short report on the state's budget and explained that everything positive or of a rehabilitative nature accomplished in the last 30 years or so, was up for elimination including CJPP. She mentioned other areas the state was looking to cut; however, they still needed to find another 64 million dollars. Miraculously, JCPC is not on the elimination list. Gudrun asked about Drug Treatment Court, and Lao responded Drug Treatment Court, Family Court, Mediation was up for possible elimination. Lao suggested writing or calling our representatives on the behalf of all of our community based efforts, she stated it does not need to be long, but we need to let our delegation, the Justice and Public Safety

Committee, the leadership of the Appropriations Committee, and the House Speaker to let them know that these eliminations will only break the system and make it worse. Lao also informed the board the continuation budget increases built into the budget were eliminated. She stressed the importance of each individual to write or call and let our positions be known. A suggestion was that it might be more effective for the CJPP Chairperson, Ann McKown to write a letter on behalf of this committee, send it to our delegations, and include Joe Hackney. Gudrun added she would get the list together so no one was missed. Another suggestion was a Resolution from the County Commissioners.

Program Updates:

Gudrun presented a program update. She stated the Transitional Living Facility opened March 1, 2009 and had been full most of the time since opening. She stated because the house was no longer tied solely to the substance abuse treatment program, it was available for anyone needing short term housing if they qualified, including those coming out of jail and people on Pre-Trial. She added if CJPP funding were eliminated and CJRC had to make more cuts to the budget, the house would have to be eliminated. The house was managed by a provider and the current contract ran through June. Gudrun expressed her disappointment at the potential loss because the house was a great tool and a great resource for CJRC programs and clients.

Gudrun announced DOC Secretary Alvin Keller and the new DCC Director Tim Moose visited the CJRC on May 15, 2009. Gudrun stated there were brief presentations of the CJRC, Drug Treatment Court, TASC, LME, and Sentencing Services. The purpose of the meeting was to highlight the CJRC and its partnerships with other agencies.

Gudrun spoke briefly about the building renovations and presented a time line of about one year for the renovations to be completed.

Gudrun announced the County's hiring freeze would remain until July 1. She added that the CJRC budget cut included 1.75 positions, which were a combination of vacant fulltime and part-time positions. She stated several other positions were vacant and currently affected by the hiring freeze; with the uncertainty of CJPP funding, the CJRC was unsure what was going to happen with those positions. She mentioned the positions affected by the hiring freeze were two substance abuse counselor positions and a case manager position. The employment specialist position was filled on a temporary basis but would become vacant at the end of June. She stated the planner/evaluator position was taken out of the budget altogether.

Robin presented an update on the employment program; she stated in October 2008, CJRC completely revamped the employment program implementing "Three Easy Steps to Employment". She explained how clients would progress through each step before moving to the next. She mentioned initially Durham Tech intended to provide two instructors to help teach the classes; however, due to DTCC's budget issues that arrangement was no longer available. She stated CJRC would have to reconsider the program and possibly make changes again. Robin reported 91 people had been served in the employment program with 18 job placements since it began. She believed those numbers were good, considering the state of the economy.

Robin reported Project Restore started with 16 participants in March and currently had 14 enrolled. Robin emphasized Project Restore was not just about helping the participants, but also the community. She stated the program had already assisted five homeowners; built a wheelchair ramp and completed a lot of exterior work. Project Restore collaborated with Habitat for Humanity and AGAPE in repairing homes and providing instruction to the participants. The non-profits needed help completing projects, and in turn, participants learned valuable construction skills. Robin added CJRC had been contacting employers daily trying to identify employment opportunities for the graduates. Robin invited the board to the graduation scheduled for May 28.

Jo Iverson presented data for CJRC programs. She stated DRC had 54 new admissions thus far this year, which was lower than normal. She reported the completion rate was at 18% and CJRC had looked into why the completion rate was so low identifying two possible reasons: clients with mental health issues and an increase in gang involved clients. Jo stated the DRC was not been set up to handle especially the first concern and needed to figure out how to deal with these two issues. Gudrun also pointed out that CJRC had little control over probation violating a case for various infractions, with violations representing a large portion of the terminations. Jo completed her data report by briefly highlighting the numbers for Reentry, Second Chance, STARR and services provided to Drug Treatment Court clients.

Improving CJRC Completion and Recidivism Rates:

Gudrun introduced Alison Dawe from Duke University who presented the report on the Student Consulting Project 'Improving CJRC Completion and Recidivism Rates'. Gudrun added that Alison was also spending a portion of her summer internship at CJRC to help implement the recommendations from the study. Alison presented the report through a power point presentation. There was brief discussion on the report including how to test clients on their reading/comprehension levels. Gudrun stated though literacy was always an issue, CJRC did not believe in forcing adult clients into educational programs. Clients who were required to be at the center daily had a choice to attend GED or employment class. Gudrun pointed out that CJRC had more GED completions this year than ever before because clients had that choice, and those who chose GED really wanted to be in class and worked hard towards the GED.

Gudrun, presenting the draft for Community Correction Plan Update, acknowledged and thanked those who worked on the document. She stated the committee decided to address special populations, such as domestic violence, sex offenders, gang involved offenders and mentally ill offenders. Gudrun explained all board members should have received the draft document via e-mail. She requested comments and feedback, and stated she would gladly incorporate additional opinions, suggestions, and ideas. When the document is finalized, it will be presented to this board for approval, and subsequently distributed and presented to the Board of County Commissioners for consideration.

News and Announcements:

Next CJPP Advisory Board Meeting would be Wednesday, Aug 19, 2009, 1:00 PM

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.